

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-17. (cancelled)

18. (currently amended) A drive unit for a vehicle with a cooling system having a cooling circuit and a medium, the drive unit comprising:

a hydrodynamic retarder having a rotor blade wheel and a stator blade wheel, wherein the hydrodynamic retarder is operably connected to the cooling system and uses the medium of the cooling circuit; and

a discharging device for discharging a residual amount of liquid of the medium against a pressure of the cooling system in a non-braking operation, wherein the discharging device suctions off the residual amount of liquid from the hydrodynamic retarder.

19. (cancelled)

20. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 18, wherein the discharging device comprises at least one cylinder operably connected with the cooling circuit or the hydrodynamic retarder via a first conduit.

21. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 20, wherein the at least one cylinder is operably connected via the first conduit with the cooling circuit to a point of highest pressure in the cooling system.

22. (previously presented) The drive unit of the claim 21, further comprising an adjustable throttle operably connected to the first conduit with the at least one cylinder and the point of highest pressure.

23. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 18, wherein the discharging device further comprises a switchable valve.

24. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 21, wherein the at least one cylinder is operably connected via a second conduit with the cooling circuit to a point of lowest pressure in the cooling system.

25. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 24, wherein the first conduit connected to the point of highest pressure in the cooling system and the second conduit connected to the point of lowest pressure in the cooling system are connected at opposite sides of a piston in the at least one cylinder, and wherein the piston is pressurized by a pressure spring biasing the piston against pressure supplied through the second conduit.

26. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 18, further comprising a pressure relief line having a pressure cut-off valve connected to the cooling system or the hydrodynamic retarder, wherein the pressure cut-off valve is operably connected with the pressure relief line thereby opening during a transition of the hydrodynamic retarder from a braking operation to the non-braking operation.

27. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 26, wherein the pressure relief line has first and second ends, the first end being connected at a point of low pressure upstream of the hydrodynamic retarder, the second end being connected at a point of high pressure at or downstream of the hydrodynamic retarder, and wherein the low pressure is at or below 2 bars and the high pressure is between 11 bars and 30 bars.

28. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 18, further comprising an engine and a transmission, wherein the hydrodynamic retarder is a secondary retarder which is arranged behind the transmission in a direction of force flow.

29. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 18, wherein the discharging device comprises a cylinder having a piston, wherein the piston is pressurized by a first high pressure on one side of the piston via a first line connected to a point of high pressure in the cooling circuit downstream of the hydrodynamic retarder, and wherein the piston is pressurized with a second low pressure on an opposite side of the piston via a second line connected to a point of low pressure in the cooling circuit upstream of the hydrodynamic retarder.

30. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 29, further comprising a throttle operably connected to the first line.

31. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 29, further comprising a pressure cut-off valve in a pressure relief line, wherein a first end of the pressure relief line is connected to a point of high pressure at or downstream of the

hydrodynamic retarder in the cooling circuit, and wherein a second end of the pressure relief line is connected to a point of low pressure upstream of the hydrodynamic retarder in the cooling circuit.

32. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 31, further comprising a changeover valve, wherein the first line has a distal end opposite to the cylinder that is connected to a control valve, wherein the changeover valve selectively directs the medium either through the hydrodynamic retarder or by-passes the hydrodynamic retarder via a by-pass, and wherein the control valve, the pressure cut-off valve and the changeover valve are controlled by pressurization.

33. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 32, wherein the hydrodynamic retarder further comprises a first single connection for supplying the medium and a second single connection for discharging the medium.

34. (previously presented) The drive unit of claim 32, wherein the control valve is bypassed when the changeover valve selectively directs the medium to by-pass the hydrodynamic retarder.